



The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)

is a preeminent federal law enforcement agency fighting violent crime in America. Year after year, ATF continues to stop those violent and criminal behaviors that threaten the peace of our communities. ATF's work to prevent the possession and use of firearms and explosives by unauthorized people helps prevent terrorism and promote the country's security. ATF's enforcement activities support the Department of Justice's strategic goal to "enforce federal laws and represent the rights and interests of the American people."

Through enforcement of federal firearms laws, investigation of arsons and explosives incidents and thefts, and efforts to combat alcohol and tobacco diversion, ATF special agents, inspectors and support personnel are determined to succeed in their mission of preventing terrorism, reducing violent crime and protecting the public.

VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION

ATF's Violent Crime Impact Teams (VCIT) work with local law enforcement to identify and arrest the most violent offenders in 20 designated cities. This initiative has placed teams consisting of ATF and other federal agents, state and local police and federal and state prosecutors in selected cities. In 2005, the initiative was expanded to an additional five cities and now includes Albuquerque, N.M.; Baltimore, Md.; Camden, N.J.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Columbus, Ohio; Fresno, Calif.; Greensboro, N.C.; Hartford, Conn.; Houston, Texas; Las Vegas, Nev.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Miami and Tampa, Fla.; New Orleans, La.; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pa.; Richmond, Va.; Tucson, Ariz.; Tulsa, Okla.; and Washington, D.C. ATF's Violent Crime Impact Team programs, coupled with Project Safe Neighborhoods, announced by President Bush and Attorney General Ashcroft in 2001, bring to bear the combined resources of federal, state and local agencies to reduce violent crime by successfully removing armed career criminals, armed criminal organizations, violent gang members, armed drug traffickers, and illegal firearms traffickers from our streets.

In FY 2004, ATF investigated 3,781 fire and explosives incidents that resulted in the death or injury of 658 people and property losses exceeding \$607 million. ATF established the Certified Fire Investigator Program more than 15 years ago. The program is unique in federal law enforcement and currently has 83 special agent fire investigators.

In response to explosive incidents, ATF's explosives enforcement officers have unique technical capabilities in explosives and bomb disposal. ATF's certified explosives specialists are highly trained special agents who have developed an unmatched level of expertise in post-blast analysis. In FY 2004, ATF had 327 explosives specialists based in 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, Canada, Mexico, and Colombia.

ATF also enforces federal criminal statutes, including the Contraband Cigarette Trafficking Act, that address the diversion of alcohol and tobacco taxes. In FY 2004, ATF conducted 438 tobacco investigations, some of them multi-jurisdictional, involving multimillion dollar trafficking schemes.

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

At the end of FY 2004, there were approximately 106,000 federal firearms licensees in the United States authorized to conduct commerce in firearms. ATF performed more than 12,000 firearms licensee inspections and made more than 2,100 referrals to law enforcement. ATF's Federal Firearms Licensing Center processed 13,042 applications for new firearms licenses and 20,464 applications for license renewals.

Also in FY 2004, ATF inspectors, in helping to ensure the lawful storage of explosive materials, completed more than 6,000 explosives inspections and detected 1,235 explosives industry public safety violations that have been corrected. ATF processed 2,873 applications for new explosives licenses and 1,641 applications to renew existing licenses.

OTHER ATF RESOURCES AND ASSETS

NIBIN - ATF provides investigative support to its state and local partners through a leadership role in the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). The program provides for the nationwide installation and networking of automated ballistic imaging equipment in partnership with state and local law enforcement agencies. The NIBIN program currently has approximately 230 sites located throughout the United States, including Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. During FY 2004, NIBIN partner agencies imaged 168,979 bullets and casings into the database, resulting in 2,669 "hits," or matches.

COMPREHENSIVE CRIME GUN TRACING - The Comprehensive Crime Gun Tracing Initiative, which began in FY 2001, continues to provide nationwide firearms tracing capability. ATF's National Tracing Center processed approximately 260,000 trace requests of crime guns in 2004. ATF has completed the development of *eTrace*; an Internet-based firearms trace submission system. Trace analysis modules will be made available to the entire law enforcement community in FY 2005.

BOMB AND ARSON TRACKING SYSTEM - The system allows state, local and other federal law enforcement agencies to share information about bomb and arson cases and incidents. Participants receive a user ID and password from ATF to enable law enforcement agencies to capture, store and exchange information such as the type of incident, target, date and location.

ARSON AND EXPLOSIVES NATIONAL REPOSITORY - The country's most comprehensive set of data describing fire and explosion incidents. In FY 2004, the Attorney General designated ATF as the sole agency to manage all departmental databases containing arson and explosives incident data. The national repository contains information on more than 110,000 arson and explosives incidents obtained from federal, state, and local fire service and law enforcement incident reports, bomb technicians and explosives investigators.

NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAMS - ATF maintains four National Response Teams consisting of highly trained special agents, forensic chemists and professional support staff who can be deployed within 24 hours to major explosion and fire scenes anywhere in the United States. National Response Teams were activated 32 times in FY 2004. Since 1978, the teams have responded to conduct crime scene analysis and cause-and-origin investigations of 588 fires and explosives incidents.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM - The ATF International Response Team participates with the Diplomatic Security Service of the U.S. Department of State to provide technical and investigative assistance at international explosives and fire incidents. In August 2004, ATF's International Response Team was deployed to Asuncion, Paraguay, to assist in the investigation of a supermarket fire that killed more than 400 people.

EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINES - Ninety-eight ATF-certified explosives detection canine teams are working throughout the United States. Thirty-four of these teams include ATF special agent handlers, while the other 64 are deployed to state, local or other federal agencies. To date, 450 explosives detection canines have been trained and deployed in 19 countries. ATF also trains accelerant detection canines for state and local fire departments. In FY 2004, ATF trained 47 accelerant detection canines.

TRAINING - During the last four years, ATF has trained more than 4,000 federal, state, local, military and international bomb technicians and investigators in explosive disposal and investigative techniques at the National Center for Explosive Training and Research. In cooperation with the U.S. Army, ATF is training Army explosive units prior to their deployment to Iraq. ATF also provides post-blast and render safe training for U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq and for the Iraqi Police Service.

Because of their proficiency in explosives investigations, ATF's special agent certified explosives specialists are used as instructors for explosive-related training at the International Law Enforcement Academies in Budapest, Hungary; Bangkok, Thailand; and Gaborone, Botswana.

NATIONAL LABORATORY SERVICES - ATF's laboratories are an invaluable resource in perfecting ATF cases and in serving as a resource for state and local law enforcement. ATF maintains three national laboratory facilities. They are located in Maryland, Georgia and California. The National Laboratory Center in Maryland serves as the administrative headquarters for ATF Laboratory Services nationwide and houses the ATF Forensic Science Laboratory and the Fire Research Laboratory. The Fire Research Laboratory is the only facility in the world dedicated to fire scene investigations. It can replicate initial fire scenarios approaching a quarter acre in size, to scale, and under controlled conditions to allow for detailed analysis. The ATF Forensic Science Laboratories were the first federal forensics laboratories to be accredited by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors.

The expertise of the ATF firearms examiners, fingerprint specialists and forensic chemists was used at all shooting scenes during the October 2002 sniper investigation in Washington, D.C. The ATF Fire Research Laboratory also deployed its mobile unit to many of the sniper shooting scenes. In FY 2004, Laboratory Services personnel received 3,460 forensic cases; provided 731 days of instruction to ATF and other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies; spent 257 days providing expert testimony in court; and spent 332 days providing scientific advice and support at ATF-investigated crime scenes. In addition, the National Laboratory Center is home to the ATF National Firearms Examiners Academy, which trains state and local law enforcement officers to become firearms and tool mark examiners.